

REQUESTED AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please enter the following amendments to claims 1, 3-6, 8, 9, 12, and 14-17.

Such claim amendments do not enter any new matter, and are otherwise intended as simply clarifications or other improvements on claim language per the Examiner's helpful comments, and not intended to result in any other substantive effect with respect to their scope. In accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.121, a claim listing including the status and text of all claims as currently presented appears below.

1. (Currently amended) A method of forming electrolessly plated terminations structures for electronic components, said method comprising the following steps:

providing a plurality of electronic components, each electronic component comprising a plurality of ceramic substrate layers selectively interleaved with a plurality of internal electrode elements, wherein selected portions of the internal electrode elements are exposed at selected locations along the periphery of the electronic component;

providing an electroless plating bath solution; and

fully immersing said plurality of electronic components in said electroless plating bath solution for a predetermined amount of time such that a termination plating material is deposited on selected of the exposed internal electrode elements of said plurality of electronic components to form respective bridged terminations and a termination structure is developed by controlled bridging of the plated material among selected of the exposed internal electrode elements.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said predetermined amount of time is less than about fifteen minutes.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said predetermined amount of time is determined corresponding to a required time to build up termination plating material to a thickness of greater than about one micron.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said plurality of electronic components are fully immersed in said electroless plating bath solution for a

predetermined amount of time such that bridged terminations termination structures having respective thicknesses of between about two and about four microns are effected.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said electroless plating bath solution comprises a nickel or copper ionic solution.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising a step of cleaning selected surfaces of the plurality of electronic components before fully immersing the electronic components in the electroless plating bath solution.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the internal electrode elements of said electronic components comprise nickel and wherein said cleaning step comprises chemical polishing to substantially remove any buildup of Nickel Oxide on the periphery of respective electronic components.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising a step of heating the plurality of electronic components to strengthen the adhesion of the respective bridged terminations termination structures to the electronic components.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising a step of activating exposed internal electrode portions to facilitate deposition of the termination plating material on the plurality of electronic components.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the activating step further comprises applying an activation material in a fashion selected from the group consisting of immersing in metallic salts, photo-patterning organometallic precursors, screen printing or ink-jet depositing metallic compounds, and electrophoretically depositing metallization.

11. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the internal electrode elements of said electronic components comprises nickel and wherein the activating step further comprises applying an activation material in a fashion selected from the group consisting of immersing in Palladium salts, photo-patterning Palladium organometallic precursors, screen printing or ink-jet depositing Palladium compounds, and electrophoretically depositing Palladium.

12. (Currently amended) A method of forming electrolessly plated terminations for

electronic components, said method comprising the following steps:

providing a plurality of electronic components, each electronic component comprising a plurality of ceramic substrate layers selectively interleaved with a plurality of internal electrode elements, wherein selected portions of the internal electrode elements are exposed at selected locations along the periphery of the electronic component;

cleaning selected surfaces of the plurality of electronic components;

applying an activation material to exposed internal electrode portions of each electronic component; and

fully immersing said plurality of electronic components in an electroless **plating** bath solution for a predetermined amount of time such that a **termination plating** material is deposited on said plurality of electronic components to form respective bridged terminations among selected of the exposed internal electrode elements.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein said predetermined amount of time is less than about fifteen minutes.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12, wherein said predetermined amount of time is determined corresponding to a required time to build up **termination plating** material to a thickness of greater than about one micron.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12, wherein said plurality of electronic components are **fully** immersed in said electroless **plating** bath solution for a predetermined amount of time such that bridged terminations having respective thicknesses of between about two and about four microns are effected.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12, wherein said electroless **plating** bath solution comprises a nickel or copper ionic solution.

17. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the internal electrode elements of said electronic components comprise nickel and wherein said cleaning step comprises chemical polishing to substantially remove any buildup of Nickel Oxide on the periphery of respective electronic components.

18. (Original) The method of claim 12, further comprising a step of heating the plurality of electronic components to strengthen the adhesion of the respective bridged terminations to the electronic components.

19. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein said step of applying an activation material corresponds to application in a fashion selected from the group consisting of immersing in metallic salts, photo-patterning organometallic precursors, screen printing or ink-jet depositing metallic compounds, or electrophoretically depositing metallization.

20. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the internal electrode elements of said electronic components comprises nickel and wherein the activating step further comprises applying an activation material in a fashion selected from the group consisting of immersing in Palladium salts, photo-patterning Palladium organometallic precursors, screen printing or ink-jet depositing Palladium compounds, and electrophoretically depositing Palladium.

21-41. (Cancelled)